

REMARKS

By the present response, claims 1-3 and 24 are amended and new claims 31-37 are added. Claims 1-37 currently are pending. In view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks advanced below, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

Starting on page 2, the Office Action includes a rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the claimed linear arrangement can only pertain to plurality of second electrodes and not to a plasma generation unit. In response, Applicant has substantially adopted the language as suggested by the Examiner's interpretation on page 2 of the Office Action and amended claim 1 to recite, "wherein the plurality of second electrodes are arranged linearly" It is believed this amendment obviates the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph.

Pages 3 to 7 of the Action also include a rejection of claims 1, 7, 10, 13, 16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Gianchandani et al. (WO 01/27969), which is equivalent to U.S. Patent No. 6,827,870 (hereinafter, "the '870 patent"); a rejection of claims 2-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20-23 and 25-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being obvious over Gianchandani et al. in view of Morfill et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,777,880); and a rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being obvious over Gianchandani et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed, insofar that the Office may consider they may apply to the amended claims.

Each of independent claims 1-3 and 24 is amended to recite, among other things, the feature of "a gas supply unit for blowing a process gas into a space between the first electrode and the plurality of second electrodes." For example, as shown in Applicant's Figure 2A (reproduced below with the added annotation: "Gas is blown into a space ...") and described in the specification starting at page 6, line 25, a process gas is caused to flow (i.e., is blown) into a space between first and second electrodes.

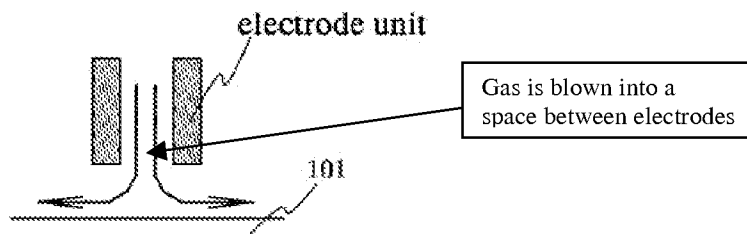


FIG. 2A

In connection with a gas supply, the Gianchandani et al. documents disclose gas sources 13 that supply gas to a vacuum chamber enclosure 11, and that gas is supplied to a region of the electrode segments 51 and 52 and the substrate 17 (e.g., see column 7, lines 8-10, and Figures 1 and 3 of the '870 patent). However, the gas sources 13 of Gianchandani et al., therefore, appear to simply fill the gas in the vacuum chamber enclosure 11. That is, the gas sources 13 do not operate to blow a process gas into a space between the first electrode and the plurality of second electrodes, as claimed. Additionally, it is respectfully submitted that the Morfill et al. patent does not describe any particulars of a gas supply unit that would have remedied the deficiency pointed out above with respect to the Gianchandani et al. documents. Hence, no combination of the Gianchandani et al. and Morfill et al. documents would have taught or suggested the combination of features presently claimed. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1-3 and 24 are allowable.

The remaining rejected claims depend from one of independent claims 1-3 and 24, and are therefore allowable for at least the above reasons and further for the additional features recited.

New claims 31-37 also are believed to recite subject matter not taught or suggested by the Gianchandani et al. and Morfill et al. documents. For instance, independent claim 31 recites a plasma treatment apparatus comprising *inter alia* "a gas supply unit for blowing a process gas to a substrate to be treated through a space between the first electrode and the plurality of second electrodes." For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Gianchandani et al. and Morfill et al. documents fail to teach or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, new independent claim 31, and hence claims 32-37 depending therefrom, are

considered allowable.

For all the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits the present application is allowable. Prompt notification of the same is earnestly sought.

Respectfully submitted,

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